Seeping of sea water in Neyveli

1633. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that there is a fear of seeping in sea water in Neyveli region of Tamil Nadu due to pumping out of huge quantity of water from the Neyveli Lignite Corporation's mines;

(b) whether Government have conducted any survey to investigate the matter; and

(c) whether there are any norms with regard to the pumping of water from deep mines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government is aware of the possibility of seeping in of sea water due to pumping out of water from mines.

(b) The Central Ground Water Board, at the request of Neyveli Lignite Corporation Ltd. (NLC), has put up observation wells along the coast to continuously monitor any salt water intrusion from sea to inland and the studies made so far indicate that there is no such occurrence. NLC has also requested Geological Survey of India to undertake scientific studies in Neyveli region so as to understand seeping of sea water, if any, due to pumping by NLC for mining operations, agriculturists and other industries operating in the region.

(c) Yes, Sir. Ministry of Environment and Forests and the Central Ground Water Board have prescribed the limits restricting ground water pumping from NLC's mines. NLC is pumping ground water to the extent it has been permitted by the above agencies.

NALCO expansion plan

1634. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Aluminium Company (NALCO) has drawn up a Rs. 4000 crore expansion plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time-frame by which the expansion plan would be taken up and completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) to (c) NALCO has submitted a proposal for expansion of capacity of its Bauxite mines, Alumina refinery, Aluminium smelter and Captive Power Plant (CPP) in second phase at an investment cost of Rs. 4091.51 crore at July, 2003 price level to be financed entirely by the Company's internal resources and commercial borrowings. The project is to be completed within 50 months from the date of the approval of the Government. The capacity of the various facilities of the Company after the proposed expansion will be as under:

Sector	Present capacity	Capacity after proposed expansion
Bauxite Mine (tpa)*	48,00.000	63,00,000
Alumina Refinery (tpa)	15,75,000	21,00,000
Aluminium Smelter (tpa)	3,45,000	4,60,000
Captive Power Plant (MW)**	960	1,200

*tpa - tonnes per annum

**MW - Mega Watt

Production of coal

1635. SHRI DATTAMEGHE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the total production of coal of various grades in the country, grade-wise;

(b) the total demand of coal of various grades in the country;

(c) whether the coal is imported;

(d) if so, the quantity of coal of various grades imported during the last three years, the value thereof and the countries from where imported, year-wise;

(e) whether the Coal India Limited has taken measures to reduce imports by augmenting production of coal: